



February 16, 2015

SB 00863: AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

SB 00839: AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN'S ISSUES

SB 00840: AN ACT CONCERNING THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN

Dear Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and Members of the Committee on Children:

As Director of Professional Affairs for the Connecticut Psychological Association (CPA), I am writing to offer CPA's **support for Senate Bills 863, 839 & 840.**

SB 863 provides for an important amendment to the Connecticut General Statutes to ensure the relevant section on risk and needs assessments in the juvenile justice system is equally applicable to females and males. Currently, the statutory language only applies to males.

SB's 839 & 840 propose studies to evaluate, respectively, "the mental, emotional and physical issues" faced by Connecticut children, and the efficacy of programs addressing the well-being of Connecticut children offered by the Department of Children and Families. With data on both the mental health needs of children in the state, as well as whether and to what extent those needs are being met, targeted programs can be developed to more directly and efficiently address these issues. Children are the future of Connecticut and the more we can meet their needs at an earlier age, the more likely they will become well-adjusted, productive members of society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Traci Cipriano, PhD'.

Traci Cipriano, JD, PhD
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
Director of Professional Affairs